



ADMINISTRATION ON AGING

Home and Community-Based Care

Currently, there are approximately two million Americans living in long-term care (LTC) institutions, such as nursing homes or other adult care settings. By comparison, more than 10 million persons of all ages need some type of assistance with their daily living activities in order to remain in their own homes or in other community-based settings. About 45 percent of persons requiring home and community-based care are between the ages of 18 and 65. Much of the remaining 55 percent are over the age of 65.

What Is Home and Community-Based Care?

The term “home and community-based care” (HCBC) refers to the full range of services and settings available to both older and disabled people living either in their own homes or in residential care settings. Generally speaking, the basic community services available through an HCBC system are as follows:

- Information and assistance
- Personal care, homemaker and chore services
- Congregate and home-delivered meals
- Adult day care
- Rehabilitative care
- Transportation assistance
- Home health care
- Caregivers’ support, assistance and respite care
- Housing options, including assisted-living arrangements
- Consumer protection and advocacy

Because older and disabled persons often have multiple and changing health and social service needs, effective HCBC programs can facilitate access to and network among the basic services provided by offering “one-stop shopping” arrangements, comprehensive assessment, care planning or case management, pre-nursing home admission screening, and linkage to medical care providers.

The national aging network strives to provide a full range of HCBC services and administrative systems to meet the needs of the elderly, disabled persons and their caregivers in every region and community across the country. The network is headed by the U.S. Administration on Aging (AoA) and comprises 57 State Units on Aging (SUA); more than 661 Area Agencies on Aging (AAA); 222 tribal organizations, representing 300 tribes; and thousands of service providers, senior centers, caregivers and volunteers.

Why Is HCBC Important?

- Surveys show that younger and older disabled persons alike and their families prefer to receive services in their own homes and communities, rather than in institutional settings.
- All states and localities are concerned about the escalating cost of Medicaid, which paid \$45.7 billion for LTC in 1994, representing more than a third of the Medicaid expenditures for the year. States and localities, all of whom have a major financial stake in containing Medicaid costs, are increasingly looking toward HCBC as a possible alternative for reducing the growth of LTC expenditures.

O L D E R A M E R I C A N S M O N T H 1 9 9 7





- As the aging of the second wave of baby boomers begins to increase the country's population of older Americans, the number of elderly people requiring LTC also will grow. Given the preference of older people to remain at home for as long as possible, the demand for comprehensive HCBC will continue to rise as well. This growing need has major implications with regard to caregiving, employment and health care policies.

What Is the Aging Network's Involvement in HCBC?

With its legislative mandate under the Older Americans Act to plan, advocate for, coordinate and develop services for the elderly, the network of SUAs and AAAs is in a strategic position to use its long-standing experience and expertise to meet the LTC needs of older persons. As a critical function of administering Older Americans Act funds, many SUAs and AAAs have coordinated and leveraged multiple sources of LTC funds, including the management of the Medicaid Home and Community-based Waiver and Personal Care Option Programs. According to a 1994 AoA report, almost half of the SUAs administer the Medicaid waiver, the most flexible source of funds for HCBC.

Many AAAs, through state allocations of Older Americans Act funds, state and local revenues, Social Services Block Grant funds, and other resources, fund local service providers to deliver basic HCBC services. AAAs also are extensively involved in case management services to ensure older persons are linked to the services they need.

The Eldercare Locator

AoA also supports a nationwide toll-free information and assistance directory for older people and caregivers called the Eldercare Locator, which can provide the name and phone number of the AAA(s) nearest to the person needing assistance. The Eldercare Locator can be reached by dialing toll-free, 1-800-677-1116, Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m., Eastern Standard Time. The Eldercare Locator is **not** an automated, touch-tone information system. Callers speak to a friendly, caring person who can help them. When calling the Eldercare Locator, callers should have the address, zip code and county of residence for the person needing assistance.

For more information about AoA and the aging network, please contact:

Executive Secretariat
Administration on Aging
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Washington, D.C. 20201

Phone: (202) 619-0724
Fax: (202) 260-1012
TDD: (202) 401-7575

Email: aoa_esec@ban-gate.aoa.dhhs.gov
Internet Website: <http://www.aoa.dhhs.gov>